

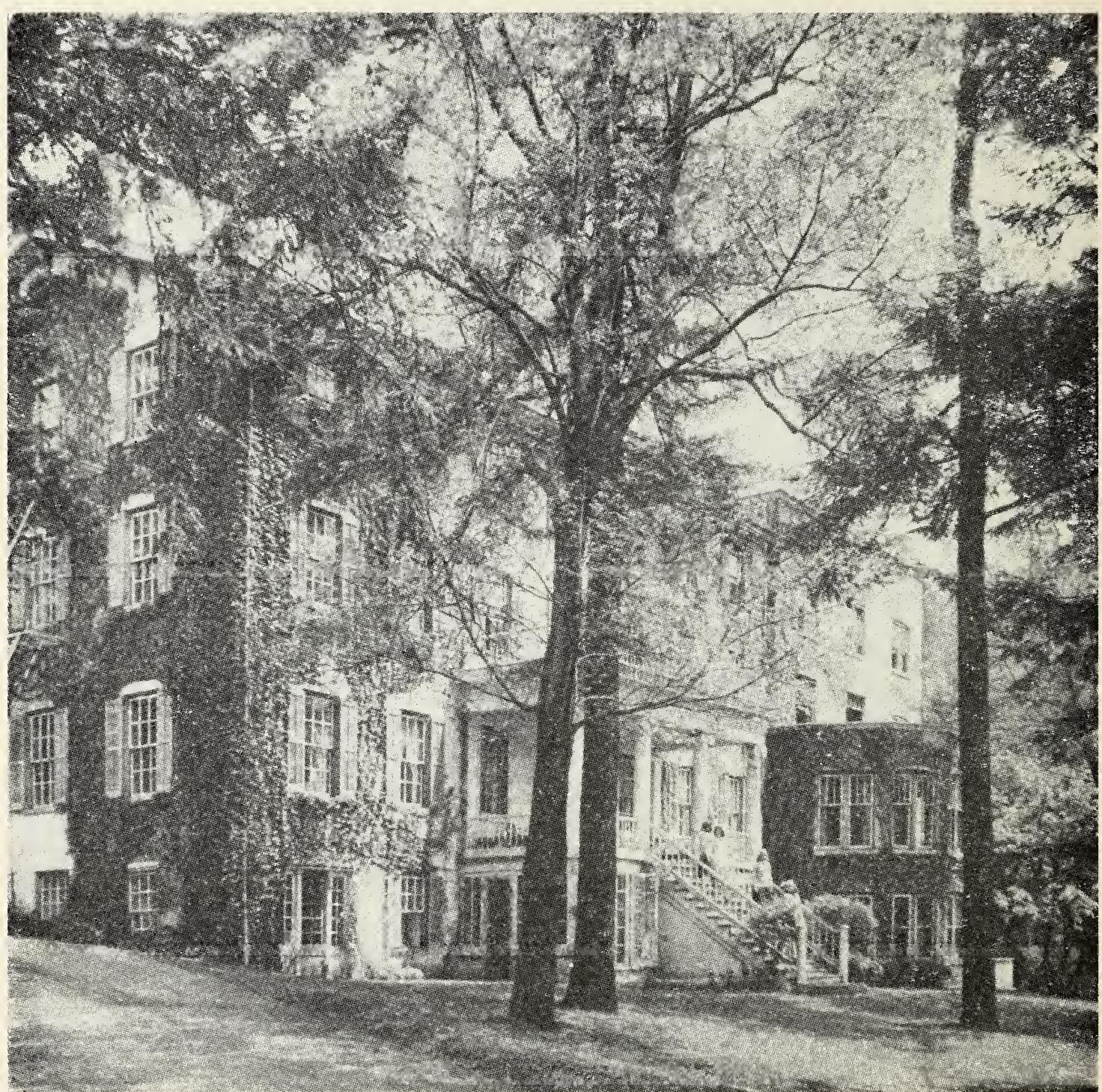




A very faint, light gray watermark-like image of a classical building with four columns and a triangular pediment is visible in the background.

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OLD MAIN  
One Hundred Years of Tradition

# The Grier School

The First  
Hundred Years

by

Harriet Green



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The purpose of this history is to describe the growth and character of a school and to suggest some of the historic and social climates that have affected its development. It might not be necessary to say that the administrators and teachers have been the transmitters of these cultural influences, as well as the creators of tone and policy within the school; but their contributions must have mention at least. Only seven individuals have been referred to specifically in this history, although nearly one hundred times that many have given of their ideas and energies to make it possible. To all of these goes the gratitude of Grier in its one hundredth year, but especially to Miss Alice Fallon, Mr. and Mrs. Preston Moulton, and Miss Grace Woolcock.

## THE GRIER SCHOOL: THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS

In 1850, the old men who sat in the "new fangled" rocking chairs and talked about "the shot heard 'round the world" could remember it well. The United States was seventy-five years old. Its population was a thriving 23,000,000 and five cities could claim more than 30,000 inhabitants. Half of the people still lived east of the Appalachians, but gold had been discovered at Sutter's Mill and the West was invaded; within two years, three brilliant legislators had fashioned a compromise so that the new gold-born state could be admitted to the union, admitted as the "free state" that was to tip the Senate majority prophetically in favor of the North. In this time of tension, President Zachary Taylor, who had so gloriously defeated the Mexicans at Buena Vista only three years before, died in office and Millard Fillmore succeeded. The news was carried by the first successful domestic telegraph line between Baltimore and Washington, completed just six years earlier.

In 1850, the East was old and the West was raw. Victoria ruled more than England, and ladies' fashions came from France, where a Monsieur Daguerre had just perfected a spectacular picture-making process; but in Concord, Emerson proclaimed that Americans must look to their native heritage. Hawthorne wrote of it in *THE SCARLET LETTER*, which drew wide comment and was promptly hidden under the second mattress; more properly, the book on the livingroom table was Mr. Audubon's latest study of birdlife. But now that public condemnation was lessening, it was considered acceptable to attend the theatre where, if one were lucky, he might thrill to a majestic performance of the rising idol, Mr. Edwin Booth. Between thrills, however, one had to be content with less spectacular social gatherings, still based on the predominant needs to husk corn, peel apples, or piece a quilt. Here and there, housewives stood in awe before one of Mr. Elias Howe's recent inventions, a machine that sewed; they welcomed friction matches and discarded the flint, gloried in new whale oil lamps, and discarded candles. In some places, there was even public water supply, instead of house pumps, although one bath a week was still considered sufficient. Cleanliness was thought to have little to do with health, but a godsend to those in pain was the new anaesthetic called ether, first used in Georgia by a Dr. Crawford Long.

In the 1850 world, however, the United States was unique, not because it had whale oil lamps, ether, or even gold, but because it had fashioned and was fashioned by its own dynamic amalgam of Martin Luther, Benjamin Franklin, the American Revolution, and 3,000 miles of wilderness. In the United States, the individual was raised high. By 1850, the frontier democracy had generally effected universal manhood suffrage, and seven states, defeated by the Misses Stanton, Mott, and Stone, had progressively granted women equal civil rights with men. The women said that, if their place was in the home, it was at the polls as well, although it was another seventy-five years before they could exert enough extra-poll influence to make the men agree. The by-word everywhere was Reform, and the slogans of women's suffrage, temperance, and prison reform were shouted from street corners. One of the loudest cries of all was for universal education.

## THE GRIER SCHOOL

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Mann and Barnard were the great leaders in education in 1850; Carter of Massachusetts, Stowe of Ohio, Swett of California, a dozen others, all urged legislators and people of influence to make provision for the universal education that a democracy should guarantee. There were great debates: Did a state have the right to tax for education? What place, if any, did sectarianism or religion, the real founder of American education, have in the schools for all the people?

While these questions were still being asked, the two hundred people of Birmingham village in Pennsylvania needed a school. Birmingham, today a village of only thirty-seven dwellings, was founded to grow with the young country. In 1797, John Cadwallader of a well-known Philadelphia family had a vision of establishing a second Birmingham, England, in Pennsylvania at the head waters of the Juniata River, which was to furnish the manufacturing power for his industry. He laid plans for a sizable, hillside town, complete with measured streets, lots (at \$5 each), and even a boat landing on the Juniata, although today the river is often deep enough to float only a canoe; then he advertised:

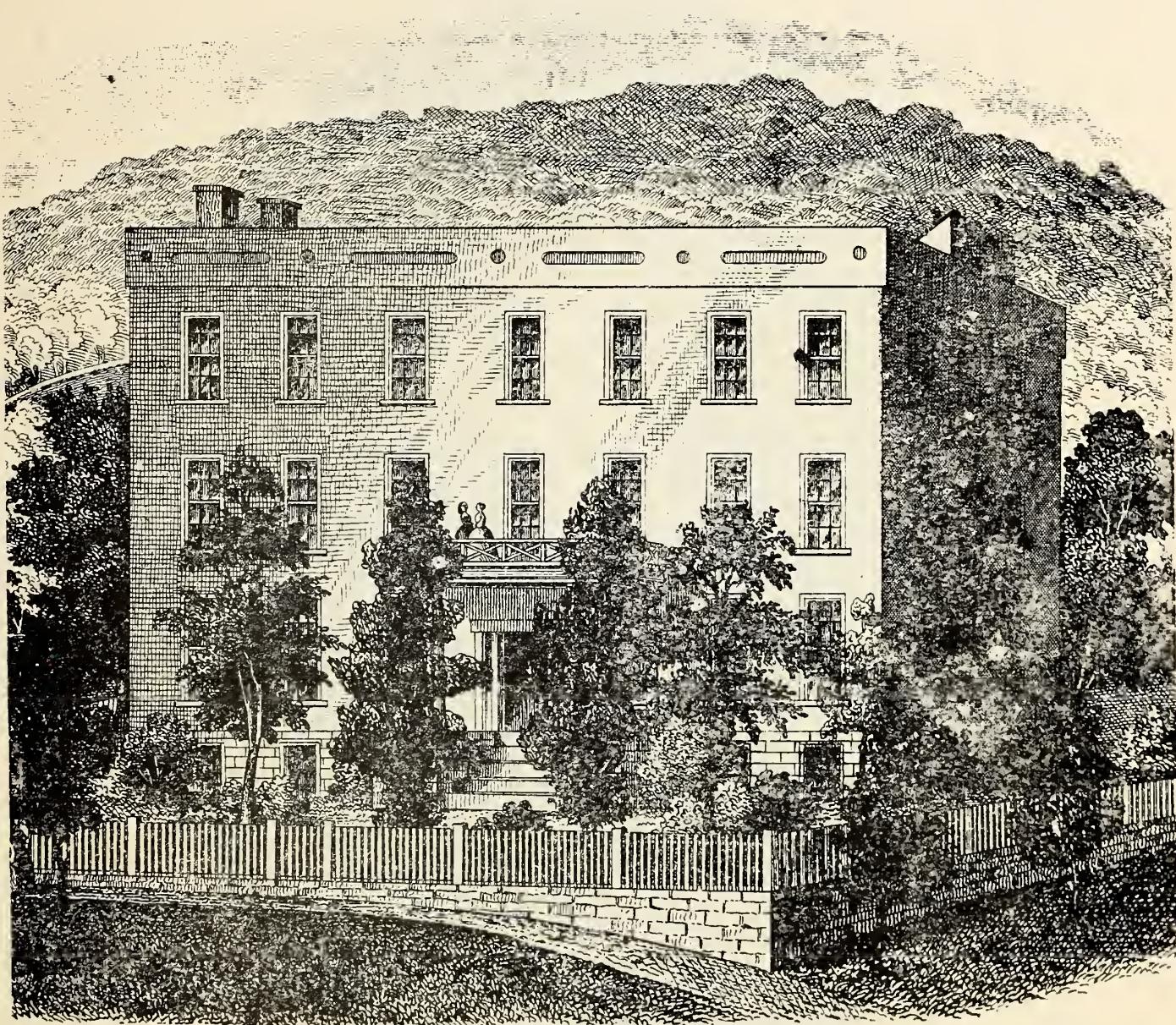
HUNTINGDON, 13th Dec. 1797.

Sir,

HAVING, for some considerable time past, been extensively engaged, in making preparations, to erect, without delay, several useful Water works, (some are now compleated) at the head of the navigation of Juniata River—which, will not only occasion an immediate demand, but afford constant and beneficial employment for a large number of workmen; particularly men of mechanical occupations. I was induced to lay out a Town, called BIRMINGHAM, on the bank of the River adjacent to the several Works and Water Seats—which will enable every workman, as well as other persons, at a small price, to obtain Building Lots, and thereby establish, near the Centre of Pennsylvania a Manufacturing Town.

John Cadwallader's plans were not realized, perhaps because of the same miscalculations that made the boat landing unfeasible. But shallow river or not, in the early 1800's, the village prospered as a hotel town for the wagon trade hauling manufactured goods from the canal at Water Street, seven miles east, to the West and raw materials from the West back to the canal. The population of Birmingham grew to two hundred, and in 1829, the village was incorporated as a borough. In 1829, the building of the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad was twenty years in the future, and the site that was to be Tyrone was only a wilderness where once Indian Chief Logan had camped by a big spring.

In 1851, the citizens of Birmingham needed a school of secondary level



(taken from an early catalog)

### OLD MAIN

with its newly planted shrubbery, picket fence, and young female students in hoop skirts.



NANCY JANE DAVIS

who, as principal and principal emeritus, shaped much of the academic life of the school for sixty-four years.

for the young ladies of the town. The first public high school in Pennsylvania had been started in Harrisburg in 1839, but of the few others in existence twelve years later none seems to have been accessible to the people of Birmingham. Even if there had been one, the citizens still might have preferred to establish their own school for, as Pennsylvanians, they were heirs to a double tradition of the privately supported school: Early in colonial days, Pennsylvania had been a stronghold of the church-controlled (or parochial) private pay school; later, it was the seat of many private academies patterned after Benjamin Franklin's grand revolt against the narrow Latin Grammar school. At any rate, in 1851, a private corporation was organized and shares in it were sold for \$5 each. From the proceeds of this sale to the local citizens, a half-acre of ground, adjacent to the village, was purchased (probably three more acres were donated), and Squire John M. Stoneroad of the borough, as the principal architect and contractor, supervised the building of the new school. On a 70' by 35' wooden frame, workmen overlaid four floors of brick, burned in a kiln at the bottom of the hill, to construct what is the core of the present main building.

In 1853, the building was completed and the Mountain Female Seminary ran its first session with Reverend Israel Ward, the local Presbyterian minister, as principal. Very little is definitely known about these early days, for no records exist to tell of enrollment, teaching staff, tuition, curriculum, and so forth. It is logical to assume, however, that Reverend Ward, as minister, was looked to as the educational leader, simply because he was probably the best-educated person in the community (especially if many workmen had answered Mr. Cadwallader's advertisement). However, the school was not sectarian, although religious instruction was undoubtedly emphasized in a curriculum also heavily laden with Greek, Latin, English and art and sewing, as the compromise between what boys learned in school and what girls had to know anyway. In the school itself, there was, of course, no running water so that the girls took their pitchers to the pump in the courtyard much as they did at home. The furniture was simple, from the large, four-poster double beds to the Empire bureaus, later to be replaced by the mid-Victorian marble-topped dressers; stools not chairs seated the girls at the dinner table; and in each room was the inevitable stove that probably did more to endear Franklin to the female student of 1853 than half a dozen changes in curriculum.

The Mountain Female Seminary was hardly started, however, when Reverend Ward and the stockholders closed the school because of financial failure. It was apparently unused for one or two years and then was sold at a sheriff's auction in August, 1857, to John McPherran, a farmer from Eden Valley, who bid and paid \$1855 for the building and plot of ground. What Mr. McPherran's intentions were, none knew, not even Mr. McPherran, for as the story goes, he was more than willing to resell the school the next December for the Scotsman's price of \$2000. The new purchaser was Mr. Lemuel Gulliver Grier who, with his wife, Sarah Boileau Grier, and Miss Nancy Jane Davis, reopened the school in October of 1857 and finally got around to signing the

## THE GRIER SCHOOL

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deed the day after Christmas. The story of the new beginnings and purchase of the school is nearly legendary.

According to an early history by Miss Davis, it all began on a warm afternoon in June, 1857, when Mr. Grier, Miss Davis, and possibly Miss Rumsey, a music teacher, were recuperating from the day's classes at coeducational Kishacoquillas Seminary (near Lewistown, Pa.), where Mr. Grier was the young principal. In the conversation, "various opinions were suggested and refuted in turn, until at length all agreed on one point—That it was not expedient to bring pupils of both sexes together from a distance to be educated under the same regulations, in the same classroom, and as one family." (Miss Davis). A hundred years has made little difference. Miss Davis had heard that the Mountain Female Seminary was "under the sheriff's hammer," and someone suggested that Mr. Grier visit it with the thought of establishing there "a school after his own heart." Therefore, at the fourth of July recess, Mr. and Mrs. Grier, Miss Davis, and Miss Rumsey took the train from Mill Creek to Birmingham, a two-hour trip, crossed the Juniata by rowboat, and covertly investigated and inquired about the Seminary. They were very pleased, for their "hopeful imaginations could see great possibilities"; and after their return to Kishacoquillas, Mr. Grier arranged to buy the school, perhaps fearing a rumored negotiator from Hagerstown Institute.

The following October, Mr. and Mrs. Grier and Miss Davis moved permanently to Birmingham to make the school ready for opening in the spring. There were times of apprehension when the furniture didn't come, but six students did—ahead of time, when the cook "was more frequently wanting than on hand" (bread was baked in the morning before classes), and when carpeting, painting, wallpapering, and laundering demanded more time than teaching. The school unofficially began when three of the original six students first knocked on the door and presented themselves as pupils, ready and expecting to be taught; three other boarding pupils and several day pupils quickly followed.

Classes were held from 9 - 12 in the morning; afternoons and evenings were for renovating. The first official session began in May, 1858, with sixteen additional boarding pupils, as many day pupils, and a third member of the faculty to teach drawing. The school has not closed since.

In the early '60's, the Civil War embroiled the country but influenced the life in a secluded girl's boarding school comparatively little. At its end, however, during the Battle of Gettysburg, the Seminary doors were closed temporarily because none knew how far the Confederate soldiers would be able to penetrate into Pennsylvania. One student, who had to travel via Harrisburg to reach her home in nearby Bellefonte, recalled the panic and confusion there; and several others who sat on the front porch of the main building remembered hearing the guns at Gettysburg that sounded like distant thunder. However, it is not flippant to say that possibly the thunder would

have frightened the seminary students more, for they knew storms but not war as it really was; they knew Longfellow and Emerson, but had yet to read **THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE** and understand its reality.

At the school itself, changes were begun almost immediately. Mr. Grier's brother Mathew, a carpenter and cabinet maker, was largely responsible for a greenhouse and a new east wing, called Jolly Hall; it included a kitchen, study hall, classrooms, and dormitory rooms and opened from the present livingroom, then four rooms instead of one. Outside, the planting of flowers, trees, and shrubbery began a longterm landscaping program to soften the "bleak, lonely" look (Miss Davis's description), and a white picket fence separated the front lawn from the public road, which ran only fifty feet from the door. The teaching staff was soon increased to half a dozen to accommodate a curriculum which included a primary department and an influx of day students. Vacations no longer came in the spring and fall, as they had earlier to allow for seedtime and harvest, but in the summer from early July until late August; this ten-month school year, with only a short winter recess, was a privilege and an advantage that only the wise or the Spartan can fully appreciate today.

The emphases in teaching and precept were religious and classical. Students of the late 1850's were listed not by their class, age, or geographic location, but by their religious denomination and that of their parents, with special notation about church membership or lack of it. Brief prayers were held every morning and evening, prayer meetings three times a week, meetings of the missionary society nearly as often (the minutes are still intact); and the curriculum itself was heavy with such courses as Moral Science, Natural Theology, and Evidences of Christianity. Just as prevalent, however, were the classical subjects of Latin, French, and advanced mathematics, which were based on the traditional needs of boys preparing for college, rather than those of girls who at that time generally were not; the girls' special subjects were voice, piano, and art (then called the Ornamental Department) which grew steadily in popularity. In order to be eligible for a diploma, each student took from eight to twelve subjects a year for three years, the length of the standard course; the first diplomas were awarded to a class of two in 1861, just after the school had been granted its charter, retroactive to 1853.

Beyond the requirements, little more is known of the early school, except for a persistent story that those who did not know their Latin rose at 5:30 in the morning to learn it. The pump was still in use in the courtyard, and there was still a Franklin stove in every room (See Fuel Fee below). Perhaps the best picture of the Seminary of the 1860's comes from the school catalogs, the first of which was published for the year 1860-61; the ideas, wording, and curriculum are mid-Victorian, and gone forever are the \$130 tuition and embroidery fee; but the **Objects in View** and **General Regulations** are timeless: Teachers still ask why a thing is so, and students still throw water and other material from windows.

THE GRIER SCHOOL

*Mountain Female*

14

CATALOGUE OF THE

*Expenses*

Boarding and Tuition in all the studies of the Regular Course, including Latin, \$130 per year; \$32.50 to be paid in advance; \$32.50 at the close of the first session, the remainder at the end of the year.

No deduction is made for absence except in cases of those obliged to leave by illness or some similar necessity.

**EXTRA CHARGES PER SESSION**

Music on Piano, Melodeon or Guitar,	-	-	-	\$18 00
Use of Instrument,	-	-	-	2 00
Vocal Music,	-	-	-	2 00
French,	-	-	-	10 00
Oil Painting,	-	-	-	12 00
Water Colors,	-	-	-	10 00
Crayon,	-	-	-	10 00
Pencil Drawing and Sketching from Nature,	-	-	-	8 00
Fuel,	-	-	-	1 50
Embroidery,	-	-	-	3 00
Incidentals,	-	-	-	50

**OBJECTS IN VIEW**

Thoroughness in every branch pursued, is the principle carried out in this Institution, to secure which, a careful preparation of every recitation is required. Students should not only know the reason why a thing is so, but they should also be able to give that reason: hence, our aim is not to stuff the mind with undigested knowledge from the Text Book, but to train its powers, so that the student may be able to think for herself. While provision is made for thorough Intellectual culture, equal care is taken in the education of the Physical, Moral and Social nature of the pupil.

SUMMER EXAMINATION begins Monday, at 9 o'clock, A. M., July 1st.

ANNUAL ADDRESS DELIVERED and DIPLOMAS CONFERRED, Tuesday afternoon, July 2d.

EXERCISES CLOSE WITH CONCERT, Tuesday evening.

SUMMER VACATION until August 29th.

WINTER EXAMINATION begins Monday, 9 o'clock, A. M., January 20th.

EXERCISES CLOSE WITH A CONCERT, January 21st.

WINTER VACATION until February 5th.

# Seminary

MOUNTAIN FEMALE SEMINARY 15

## Mountain Female Seminary

Birmingham, Huntingdon County, Pa.

This institution is situated on an eminence overlooking the Juniata, and commanding a view as picturesque as any for which this little river is so justly celebrated. If it be true, that the grand and beautiful in natural scenery contribute largely to the ennobling of the mind, in the course of its development, surely the choice of location for the Mountain Seminary is a happy one. It is sufficient to say to those acquainted with Allegheny scenery, that the surrounding landscape is a fine specimen. The building is admirably adapted to the object for which it was designed. The young ladies' rooms are furnished with everything necessary to health and comfort—two pupils occupying each room. The whole building is heated by furnaces, which have given entire satisfaction even during the coldest weather.

### EXERCISE

Students are required to take daily exercise either in the Calisthenic classes or in walking. The surrounding mountains present interesting fields for Botanical research.

### TO CANDIDATES FOR ADMISSION

1. Each young lady is required to bring shoes suitable for walking on the hills; also overshoes and umbrella.
2. Each pupil is required to bring her own towels, table napkins and a blanket; and these, as well as articles of wearing apparel, should be marked with the owner's name.
3. Ordinary visiting during the Term cannot be allowed.

### GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. Damage to furniture or room will be charged to occupants, and no exchanging of furniture will be permitted.
2. No water or other material must be thrown from windows.
3. No student is allowed to enter another's room during recitation, nor after the ringing of the second bell in the evening.
4. Each student of Instrumental Music will have a regular hour for practice, during which time no spectator is allowed to be present.
5. Writing on walls, windows or doors, is strictly prohibited.
6. Students are required to respond promptly to the ringing of the bells.
7. Noise in the halls or any part of the building cannot be allowed.

## THE GRIER SCHOOL

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In the second half of the nineteenth century, the United States nearly burst its seams. Between 1850 and 1900, it acquired fourteen new states and four territories and more than trebled its population; in 1869, it finished building 3,000 miles of railroad track, six years later, in the name of Custer, finally defeated the desperate Indians, and then "closed" the frontier in 1890. It survived two wars, two serious depressions and Coxey's army, wrangles over currency, an influx of "undesirable" immigrants, its first big railroad strike, the trusts, and Boss Tweed. In 1876, Bell displayed his new invention at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition; three years later, Edison invented the incandescent bulb, and James Ritty, in keeping with the times, patented his new cash register. Everyone was so busy that little, if any, attention was given to two European "innovators," Marx and Darwin.

The frontier and the two wars helped to break down old social barriers and to establish a new aristocracy based on wealth. In all classes, the "society" tended to be showy, artificial, and mannered in everything from conduct to furniture and dress. Generally, women were still treated with grand chivalry, still lived sheltered lives, and still never—or nearly never—showed an ankle. In fashion, skirts were full, ten yards to the average dress, mustaches were much admired, and every house had a cupola, a what-not, a plush settee, and an iron animal, preferably a deer. Toward the end of the century, however, "frosting" began to give way to "realism." Some women forsook "their place in the home" and, still not arriving at their place in the polling booth, settled for one behind the new female emancipator, the typewriter; as a sign of her liberation, the new woman wore a still long, of course, but simpler, gored skirt and a choker-necked waist. The men were soon to be in the corner.

The development of education from 1850 - 1900 was phenomenal. The question of public education was finally settled by the decision in the famous Kalamazoo case that it was legal to tax the public for public school support. The cost of all public education increased by more than 400% in the last half of the century, and the number of public schools grew fifty fold. But the most significant strides in a consideration of the private school were those made in emphasis and teaching method. In the 1860's and 1870's, most teachers taught simply because they knew more than the students; only a fraction ever attended a teachers' college, and even those few had not been told how to teach best. Too often formal memorization and discipline were the methods of teaching because they ensured an orderly classroom and a tangible amount of learned subject matter. However, one of the first to criticize "rote" or "haphazard" learning was a German named Herbart who died before his influence was felt in America; it was his theory that English and history, especially, could be taught best through a five-step process: preparation, presentation, association, systematization, and application. His approach, although formal, stressed the development of the student's thinking processes, the value of the subject matter, and finally, the student's social usefulness, through such courses as manual training and home economics. What Herbart began, Pestalozzi and Dewey continued and impressed. Pestalozzi, the kindly Swiss schoolteacher,

saw the child, not the subject matter, as the focal point in the classroom; according to him, teaching should involve the total, slow-developing personality and not just the thinking mechanism. The Yankee philosopher, John Dewey, was just at the beginning of his career in the latter part of the century, but even then he pointed to the new field of psychology, heretofore a stepchild of philosophy, re-defined it, and said that it was the key to learning. His theme of learning through experience was set but not expounded.

It is hard to tell the degree of direct influence of Herbart or Pestalozzi or Dewey on the Mountain Seminary. The educational aims from the beginning had been independent thought and self-reliance, and they were restated in every catalog for forty years:

Our aim is not to stuff the mind with undigested knowledge but to train its powers so that the student may be able to think for herself.

It is very possible that Herbart's five steps were used, especially if one is to judge by the descriptions of the English and history courses in the catalog. For nearly thirty years, English history was taught with an outline text and twelve to fifteen reference books, ranging from Miss Strickland's *QUEENS OF ENGLAND* to Gibbon's *DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE*.

The Topic being assigned, each member of the class is required to read it up thoroughly in as many reliable authors as she can . . . and present the result of her investigation orally in class. Each recitation is supplemented by remarks and criticisms, and important events are emphasized. Written tests are required frequently.

It is needless to add that independence of judgment and thought must result from this process.

In the 1870's and 1880's, the curriculum remained traditionally academic; however, it was strengthened in 1887, when three separate courses were established: the academic, including English and mathematics, the college preparatory, including the classics and mathematics, and the combined English, classics, and mathematics course, which, in accord with the latest educational trend, took four years, instead of three. Earlier, Greek, German, and rhetoric had been introduced and with the four-year course, American literature was also allowed some time. Probably the fastest growing and most popular departments were those of music and art, which for many years included the fine skill of China decoration. However, in the last decade of the century, the emphasis on the classical was declining slightly, and there was a new course in psychology, just as the word was on the tip of Dewey's tongue. For the first time, "Light Gymnastics" were required now that there were a gymnasium, complete with the bowling alleys and chestweight machines, and basketball and tennis lawns. Learning was changing; Moral Science and Evidences of Christianity were taught as they had been fifty years before, but there were forecasts of new theory and practice.

## THE GRIER SCHOOL

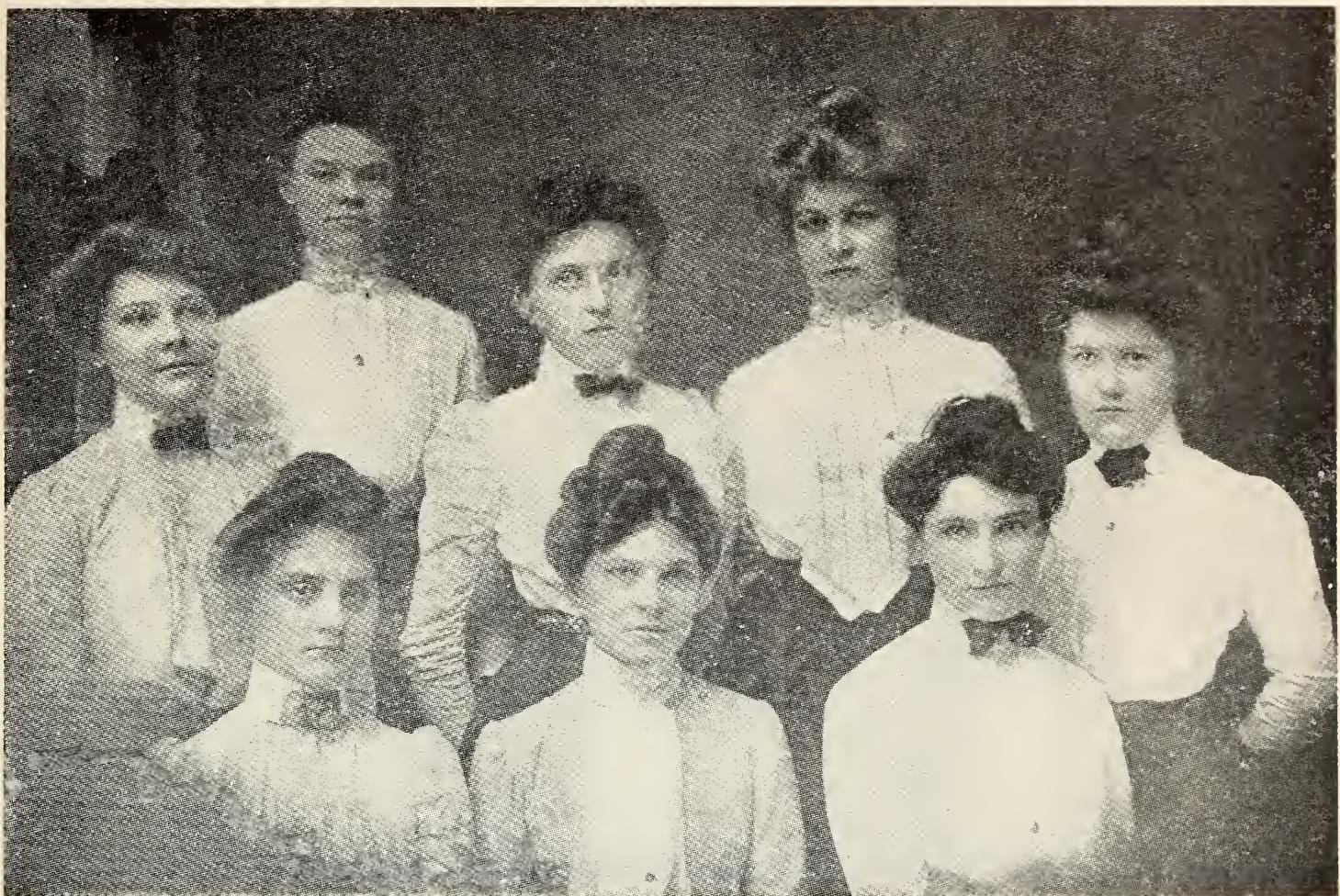
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Over the span of fifty years, probably the curriculum changed the least of anything at the Seminary. The ink in 1860 catalog was hardly dry before the \$130 tuition was seen in truer perspective and raised to \$150 and then raised again in 1866 to \$260. It stayed at this level until 1886, when it was lowered to \$250 where it remained until 1900. The higher tuition was no deterrent, however, for by 1870, forty-five boarding students were enrolled, and the school, now called the Mountain Seminary, was prosperous enough to have purchased fifty acres for its campus. For the first time, too, the Seminary was described as a "family school", a phrase that started a tradition. In 1874, the girls' rooms were furnished with gas lamps and steam heat, although there was still need for a fuel fee, and in 1880, the catalog proudly announced telephone service. For some time a building program had been underway: in 1869, Shelter Oak, the principal's residence, was ready for Mr. and Mrs. Grier, who had sold their house to the Presbyterian Church for a manse just after the church itself had been moved to the campus in 1868. In the 1870's the original lodge was built to expand dormitory accommodations; in 1883, the Art Hall and Seminary Herbarium, later called the Gate House, was built on the lawn south of Shelter Oak, and in 1889, the gymnasium finished the "construction spree" that had netted five different buildings in forty years.

It was probably in the '70's and early '80's that the school experienced eight years, its only eight years, of coeducation. It seemed fitting that Mr. and Mrs. Grier's sons should have the solace and companionship of at least some of their own sex; so about a dozen boys boarded at the school and shared classes with them. The original proclamation of Kishacoquillas must have been muttered often, for many years later, Mr. William C. Davis, one of the original co-eds, recalled most vividly "a certain garden on a certain afternoon." Mr. Davis and Alvan Grier went "gathering rhododendron blossoms for two lovely creatures" who then "pelted us and decked us with flowers of our gathering! How we flirted and frolicked till the lengthening shadows fell from the mountain! Oh, youth, youth!"

In May, 1887, Dr. Lemuel Grier died at fifty-seven. His son, Alvan, then studying law at the University of Pennsylvania returned to the school and immediately assumed its financial management while Miss Davis continued to shape academic policy; as before, Mrs. Grier acted as advisor and official hostess. The tributes to Dr. Lemuel Grier have been many; but perhaps the fullest and most helpful to an understanding of the early school is one by the same Mr. Davis who was a "coed"; in it, much of the character of the school can be seen through the character of its principal. One of Mr. Davis's primary emphases is Dr. Grier's deeply religious character which was an integral part, not only of the school, but of the community life: "With him religion was a living reality and worship a part of a day's work." Within a year after his arrival he became Ruling Elder of the Birmingham Presbyterian Church (a position he held for thirty years) and even conducted services in the absence of the pastor. As an educator . . .

He wrote no books, invented no new methods of study, and blazed no new paths through realms of learning . . . . But his abilities as a



(from the 1901 CARDINAL)

The Misses Hill, Bower, Gerwig, Wilson, Pollock, Hill, Shaw, and Young, the Class of 1901, looking out from under their Gibson girl pompadours,



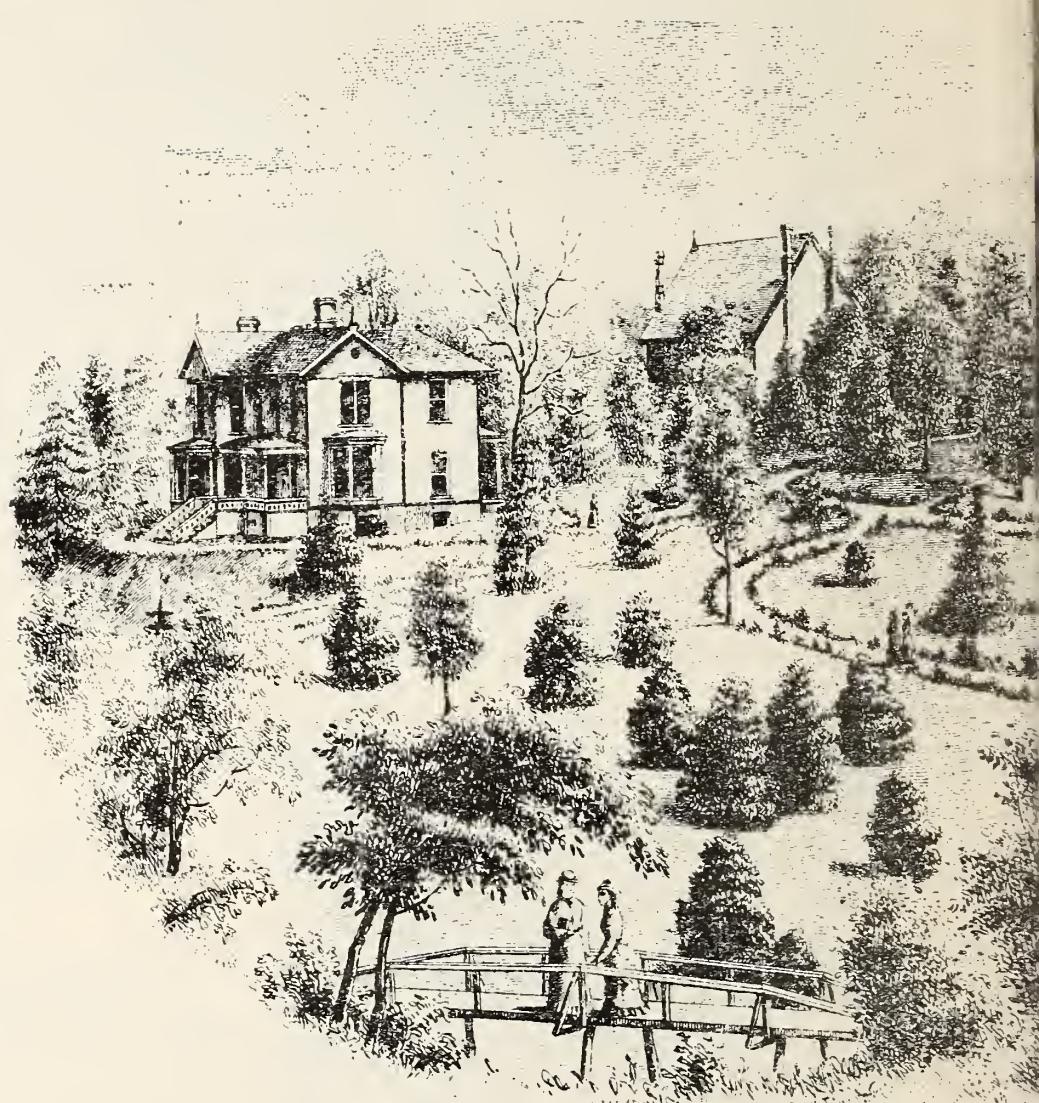
(from the 1910 PINE NEEDLE)

LOUISE ANGLE

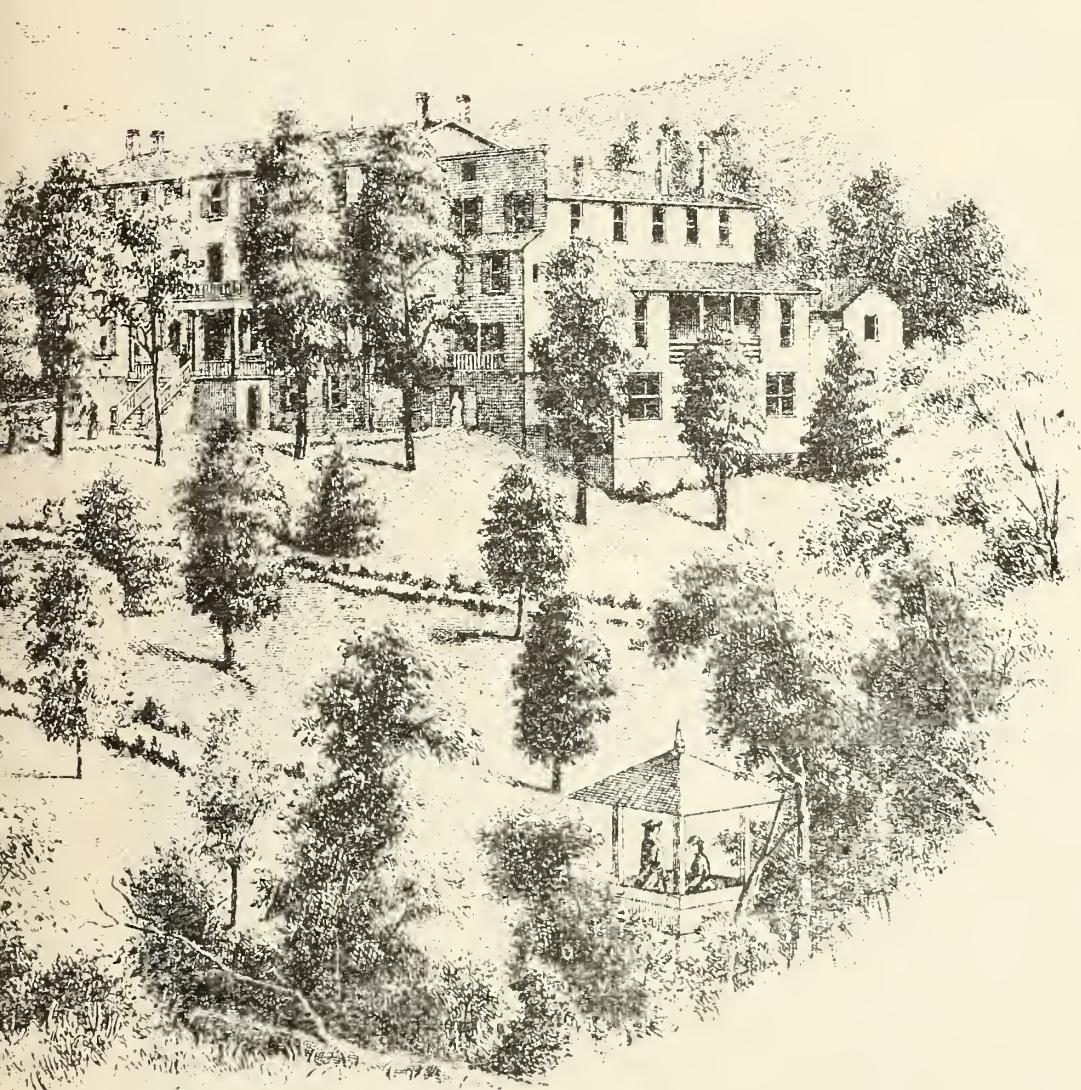
Most Sentimental  
of 1910

VIRGINIA HALL

Cutest Girl  
of 1910



An artist's conception of the Mountain Seminary ne  
and "lovely creatures" adorning the lower slopes.



the turn of the century, with tennis house, ravine foot-bridge,



An artist's conception of the Mountain Seminary near and "lovely creatures" adorning the lower slopes.

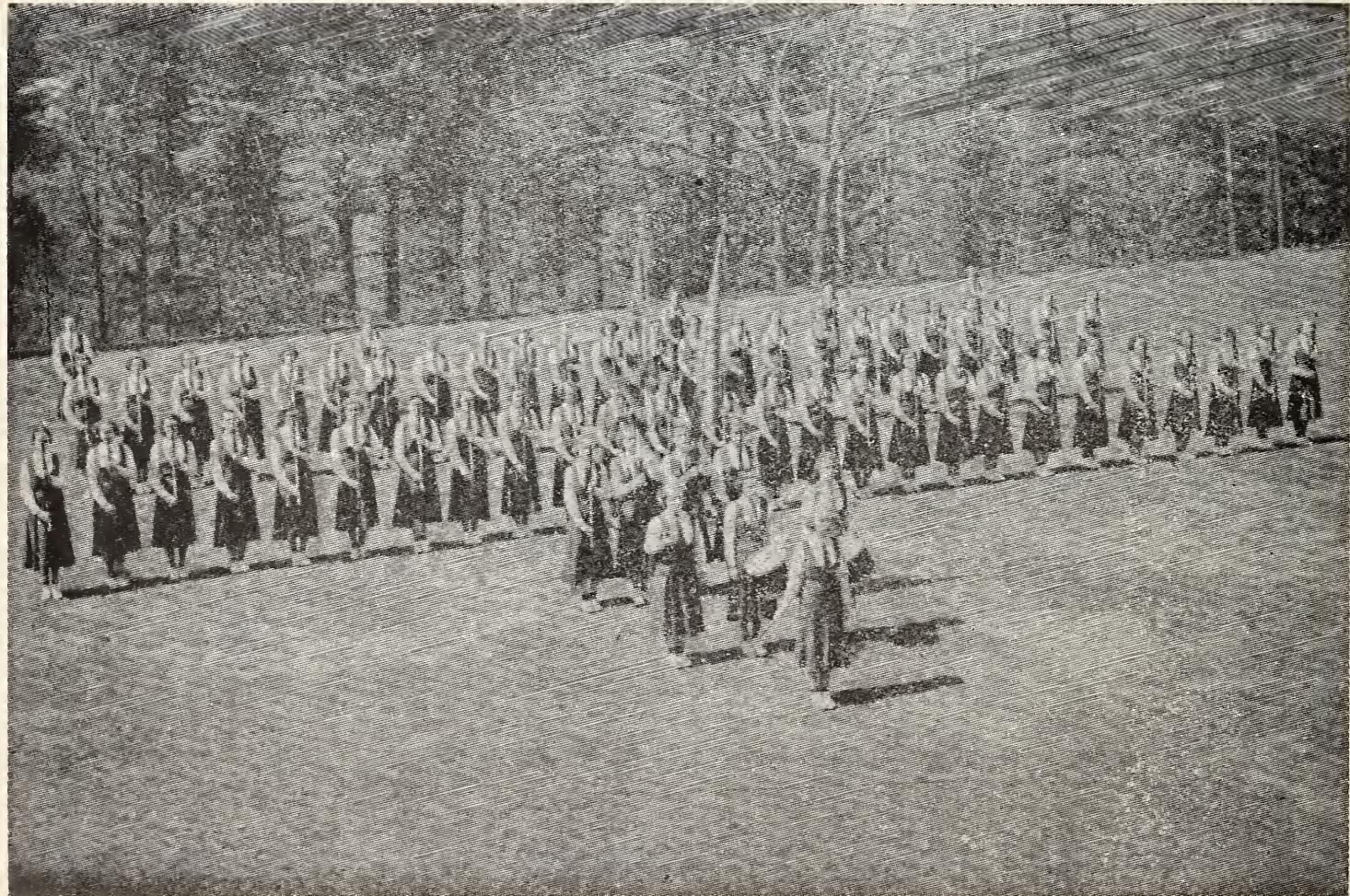


An artist's conception of the Mountain Seminary near the turn of the century, with tennis house, ravine foot-bridge, and "lovely creatures" adorning the lower slopes.



(from the 1919 PINE NEEDLE)

"Slowly, onward, hesitating,—  
Comes the bus."



(from the 1937 PINE NEEDLE)

#### MILITARY DRILL

Self-discipline and self-reliance at 8:30 in the morning.

teacher were undoubted. His principle was not to cram the pupil's mind with mere dead learning having no disciplinary value, but to drill the mind to think, as well as to acquire knowledge . . . to find out and extract the living meaning of learned treatises . . . to drill the mind to do this for itself, in a word, to transmute the lore of books into wisdom, such was his aim. But over and above all this he put into his work of teaching what many more accomplished scholars do not, his strong, healthy, well-balanced moral qualities, which directly and powerfully influenced every pupil who came into contact with him. He belonged to the class of educators of which Arnold of Rugby, Mark Hopkins of Williams, and Maclean of Princeton were types,—teachers who coordinated mental drill and moral fibre, so that both were wrought in well-balanced harmony. (from the address of William C. Davis at the memorial service in honor of Professor Lemuel G. Grier, at the Birmingham Presbyterian Church, June 2, 1907.)

The last decade of the 1800's and the first of the 1900's marked the turning of more than a century; the turning of ideas and the turning of the "wheels of progress" brought changes in the tone and tempo of living that were subtle and fast. The turning of ideas was an American revolution in literature and the arts that echoed with the names of Europeans Marx, Darwin, and Freud, and spawned as many cults as there were streets in Greenwich Village. The turning of the "wheels of progress" brought to The Machine Age a new force that penetrated with Ford and expanded with the Wright brothers. The theme was change: From the country to the city, from the horse to the automobile, from the home to "public entertainment", from work to leisure, from busy-ness to tension, so that by the time of the Great War, there was new nostalgia in the old phrase, "the good old days".

Early in the good old days, "lovely creatures still flirted and frolicked" and perhaps tossed a rhododendron blossom or two—if they pleased, but the same lovely creatures were also finding pleasure in the independence and self-reliance that came with the choker-necked waist. They began to realize that if they wanted to they could do more than decorate chinaware. They did "want to", and in 1893 the subdued, formal, intently cultured school activities were sparked with new perspective and life when the lovelies decided to publish their first newspaper, THE CRICKET: "To have a cricket on the hearth is the luckiest thing in the world." - Dickens. The issue of June, 1894, now crumbling where it folds, records the sports, the studies, and the social life of the year.

1894: The spring athletic exhibition opened with two drill classes, one of which performed with Indian clubs and relaxing exercises and the other, with Indian clubs and dumbbells; there were footraces, high-jumps, individual tests of strength, and finally a tug-of-war with three on a team. In academic work, the treatise received special emphasis, and seniors read aloud at commencement their research papers on such topics as

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### A Resume of Our Year's Work

He Wins Who Dares  
Botanical Recreations  
True Womanhood

However, on the back page was evidence that there was always the academic boner and jot of humor: the "'enfant terrible' on her examination paper was not quite sure that Lincoln died in office. She says she knows he was killed but doesn't remember whether he died or not. Verily the workings of the youthful mind are wonderful."

Noted socially were an afternoon visit to Tyrone and several visits of parents or friends to the school; also of special interest was the fact that "Miss Davis received a box of cypripedium candidum from an alumna traveling in Minnesota." The social highlights were two parties that reveal the earnestness and grace of the 1890's in their very expression.

On Saturday, the 28th of April, in the absence of Miss Davis, instead of being entertained in the usual manner, reciting, etc., . . . we were all assembled and papers were passed around on which were written the following topics:

1. The last book I read
2. Coxey's army
3. The disadvantages of being good-looking
4. The daily newspaper
5. My queerest experience
6. Birmingham's latest improvements
7. The funniest story I ever heard

Five minutes were to be spent in conversation on each topic, and soon everyone was bustling around to procure a partner . . . When all was arranged, a bell was rung . . . as a signal to begin and after the first topic . . . a tap of the bell reminded us that five minutes were up, and we hurried away to find our partner for the next . . . I think everyone was sorry when it came to an end. The enjoyments of the evening were closed by an instrumental solo. . .

On another occasion:

Later in the evening, the company gathered in a pleasant little knot around the tea table to enjoy the tea which the fair young hostesses poured from pretty urns, and over tea, cake, and ices the rest of the evening was spent in delightful conversation.

THE CRICKET, "published every little while for the information of our friends," began an era of change, and within several years it recorded a spate of activity, much of it newly conceived: theatrical productions, Current Event discussions, university lectures, concert upon concert, the Mendelssohn Society, which was liberal in its appreciation of other composers, the spelling bee,

basketball—played in voluminous bloomers and black stockings, and the formation of the Y. W. C. A. and the Glee Club. There were Gibson girl parties, held in the Loaferie, musical forfeits, sleigh rides, and peanut hunts on the croquet lawn; then began the threads of traditions, some still strong today: teas at Shelter Oak, the Christmas party, the Saturday - Monday week end which lasted until the early 1940's, the Maypole and pageant, the "pink tea", the Seminary bank, and birthday dinners. In the afternoons "crowds of trampers go out in search of ferns and autumn leaves and nuts or watercress" so long as the trampers were in groups of five and had a chaperon; afterwards, evenings were "spent in fancywork while someone sang or read."

Then symbolically 1900 held the most far-reaching changes and innovations of probably any other single year of the school's history.

In 1900, the school became a member of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory schools of the Middle States and Maryland (now the Middle States Association), the relatively new organization that grew out of educators' needs to exchange information and set standards for themselves. The school intended its policies and courses to be guided largely by the regional association and the National Education Association.

In 1900, the demerit system was instituted with its method of checks and privileges; then, demerits were removed by "study on the weekly holiday," and those without demerits were placed on an Honor Roll. In 1902 the system of government by demerits was described in a NEW YORK POST article which drew much comment, mostly favorable; but with suggestions for improvement, more emphasis was placed on training through the earning of privileges. The result became another traditional practice: With good conduct and a class standing of 90%, a student could earn the privilege of studying in her room, of proving her own self-reliance.

In 1900, the school seal was fashioned and officially adopted, and with it came the tradition of the green and the gold as school colors; they were not to designate the school teams until 1916. THE CRICKET described the design of the seal, pointing out its elaborate symbolism:

The design provides for a shield of green enamel, crossed by a band of red, on which the school name will appear; above the band, in gold, is a winged sphere, the Egyptian symbol for a perfect mind. Below the band, in gold, is a five-pointed star, the mediaeval symbol for a sound body, the perfect balance of the five senses. The crest, above the shield, is a pinetree, in green enamel. The whole symbolism of the color—green and gold—of the tree, the star, and the winged sphere; and of the motto, "mens sana in corpore sano," suggests the aim of the school, to aid in developing sound minds in sound bodies. The pinetree further suggests the situation and surrounding of the school.

## THE GRIER SCHOOL

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In 1900, plans were made for the first yearbook, THE CARDINAL, named for "the fiery grosbeak, one of the more familiar birds in the Seminary grounds." Published first in the spring of 1901, THE CARDINAL apparently had only three issues, and it was not until 1910 that THE PINE NEEDLE began its unbroken sequence. THE CARDINAL, with tongue in cheek and a special eye for detail, brings to life the Seminary of 1900 through photographs, etchings, and studiously polished prose. As befits the title, there is a scholarly treatise on the "Birds of Birmingham" and in contrast a humorous sketch by "the youngest girl in school—aged 12," both of which display remarkable factual knowledge and mature expression. A group photograph of the eight seniors shows them looking out from over high Gibson girl collars and from under high pompadours, satirized in a drawing on the humor page as the final step in the evolution of the buggy top. There are pictures of a slightly harried Mr. Grier, head in hand, with his group of young ladies; the rustic bridge that spanned the ravine until the mid-thirties, students welcoming Mr. Grier and his new bride who were pulled up the hill in a carriage drawn by the girls themselves (later the bride was carried to supper on their shoulders). But most timely and revealing is an article, titled simply GIRLS. Analyzing the femininity of the 1800's with an exaggerated twentieth century objectivity, it exemplifies the 1900 self-consciousness that was serious, earnest, and straight in the path from the Misses Cady and Stanton to the Nineteenth Amendment.

GIRLS: This topic immediately suggested a line from an old song, "As numberless as the Sands of the Seashore." Did anyone ever try to describe each separate and individual grain of sand, to note the peculiarities of every rose or to examine every dewdrop? . . . Study them (girls), live among them, and you will find that they are as difficult to know as the French irregular verb and as complex as a Greek conjugation. . . . Like a prism, she gains a hundred inflections, from a hundred sides, and leaves the student dazzled and confounded . . . .

"Sugar and spice  
And all that's nice  
That's what little girls are made of"

. . . . Under the name of 'sugar' may be gathered those common characteristics, such as beauty, grace, kindness, generosity, and loveable-ness. Under 'spice' should be included coquetry, wilfulness, love of teasing, and playfulness. . . . Yet there are a few traits which should be mentioned especially.

"The first is interest. In what is the modern girl not interested? Mention any subject known to mankind, immediately her interest is aroused. She begins to investigate,

she studies the subject, she questions every person who could possibly know anything about it, and the next time the subject is mentioned, she is fully informed. By the unobserving person this interest is sometimes called curiosity. The two must not be mistaken. Curiosity leads to gossip which the modern girl disdains, but interest leads to a speaking knowledge of all the wonders on earth and in the waters under the earth. Interest enables a girl to discuss everything from the tiniest germ in the atmosphere to the Chinese situation in the East.

"A second striking characteristic is love of beauty. Once again the thoughtless person must be warned not to confound this love of beauty with vanity. The majority of girls are not vain, but they consider it their duty to look their loveliest at all times. If girls spend much time in dress and talking of dress, it is because they think that 'if a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well.' No one questions the premise that we must dress; then it follows, to dress well requires much thought and discussion. Girls are great philosophers in many ways, and this is one of the problems which they find most difficult to solve to their satisfaction.

"Another important trait in the character of girls is the ease with which they change their minds. This might be called caprice and is one of the spicy constituents. This is not at all the same thing as fickleness. This ability to change one's mind with lightninglike rapidity leads to that fine trait called adaptability, which girls possess in such a marked degree. Given any circumstance and one-half second of consideration, and the girl of this century fits herself to her surroundings as though she had never known anything else. If she lacks this characteristic, she is classified immediately as stubborn and obstinate."

The 1900 girl might have been rationalizing a little, especially about her duty to look lovely, but that's part "of what girls are made of" in 1800 or 2000. It was her desire to be able to discuss everything from the tiniest germ to the Chinese situation that was new and prophetic. *Am I Educated?* asks a headline in a 1903 CRICKET; five evidences were offered as criteria, with the remark that they could be had without college training:

1. correctness and precision in the use of the mother language
2. refined and gentle manners, which are the expression of fixed habits of thought and action
3. the power and habit of reflection
4. the power of growth
5. efficiency, or the power to do.

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.... truly without these characteristics, knowledge can never become power, and in their possession lies the secret of "gaining an education."

The girls, however, were hardly the only ones concerned with their education, for everywhere school heads and teachers began consolidating and exchanging views. They all agreed that each of the five evidences of education was valid, but there was great difference of opinion about emphasis. The influence of Dewey was the key. His theme of learning through experience (which stressed Criterion 5) was fast gaining ground although with much opposition, so much in fact that in 1904, Dewey was forced to leave the University of Chicago, which found the results of his experiments disconcertingly successful. He then went to Columbia University's Teachers' College, which was much more receptive to his ideas, and so, almost singlehanded, he started the experience-versus-book conflict that has divided American educators ever since. (The extremes in this division have ranged from the 'strict traditionalists', who hold that the ultimate in knowledge is the page of a book, to the Progressives, who believe that the child can educate himself with just a little adult help.) There was much upon which educators agreed, however: Generally, they agreed that they knew abysmally little about systematic school procedures and about the 'inner-workings' of the student who was increasingly viewed as a total personality and not just a "disciplined mind." They set up committees to investigate and looked with new reverence to administrative experts and psychological testers. They agreed on the need for uniform standards, such as a four-year curriculum for graduation from secondary school and specific college entrance requirements. They set up more committees that eventually were to recommend such contemporary by-words as the Carnegie Unit, the I.Q., and the College Entrance Examination Board.

In the first decade of the new century, it was almost impossible for an alert educator to reexamine his school and not find that it could benefit from a new development. In 1904, The Mountain Seminary restated its aim with the new emphasis of self-reliance:

The aim of the school is to give the girls a thorough and broad education; to develop the faculties of heart and soul, mind and body; to instil principles of punctuality, order, simplicity, refinement, self-control, and industry, so that we shall send from our halls young women possessing strong, self-reliant characters.

The school revised its curriculum to differentiate between the college preparatory and the academic courses and to make the course requirements clearer. Although by this time the school had definitely limited itself to the secondary level (No students under twelve were accepted), only one student in four or five was enrolled in the college preparatory course, primarily because college education for women was still a notable exception. The school was interested in stressing its college preparatory program and, with this as a primary reason, changed the name of the school to The Birmingham School for Girls, for the word "Seminary" in the previous name had implied a curriculum terminating at the secondary level, rather than leading to college work.

In 1910, with the impetus of standardization, the curriculum was again revised along patterns familiar today: the four-subject year, four-year course (for both college preparatory and general course), and the sixteen-unit plan as prescribed by the regional association. Fundamentally, however, the content changed very little and, in the college preparatory course, was still determined largely by admission requirements of specific colleges: In the college preparatory course, often four years of Latin and English (Latin taking precedence in the listing), three years of a second language, and two of a third (French and German) were required in the still language-heavy curriculum. The rest of the units were allotted to mathematics, given all four years, and history which ran a poor third; there were no units allowed for science of any kind. However, the academic course, for the first time also called the general course, was broader in scope and more liberal in choice. There were four years of English, but a modern language could be substituted for Latin, and only two foreign languages were required. History was given in all four years, mathematics only three, and there were two courses in science, physiology, and botany. In the senior year for the first time, History of Art and Travel was offered as the precursor of the History of Art, so much in demand today.

This curriculum, the core of academic teaching, has been continually modified and adjusted according to student needs and changing college admission requirements which gradually have eased to allow for broader subject scope. Within a year of the 1910 revision, the Dewey-charged maxim that "A student should learn to do well what he is going to do anyway," brought a new recognition of the needs of the non-college preparatory students; a new phrase was added to the school aim, ". . . . homemakers of the future," and a new subject—Home Economics—was added to the curriculum for those in the academic course. Six years later, Current Events, Hygiene, and Expression (speech) were required each year for one period a week; Spanish was introduced as an elective, and some choice in history and science was allowed in the college preparatory course. As the administration had hoped, the number of students taking the college preparatory course increased steadily; by 1919 they were taking the newly established College Entrance Board Examinations, and by 1925 the school became a C. E. E. B. testing center. Finally, twenty-five years after the original curriculum revision, the ratio of college and non-college preparatory students was reversed, and the school could point with pride to its continued (since 1918) acceptance by the Middle States Association as one of the 113 accredited schools of a possible 3300 in the area. At the seventy-fifth anniversary, there was a prediction that, since the college preparatory course was well established, new consideration would be given to the development of the general course. The junior college movement, rising at this time, was focusing further attention on essentially unscholarly abilities with the institution of vocational and terminal programs for which a general course curriculum was acceptable preparation. The resulting expansion in the scope and content of the general course included the substitution of Typing for Home Economics (for Typing was a tool much in demand by college preparatory students as well), the reintroduction of Music Appreciation as a correlative to History of Art, both acceptable also to four-year colleges, and the introduction of Dramatics and Shorthand. By the centennial

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year, the school curriculum was offering twenty-seven subjects for college preparatory credit and, in addition, eleven subjects, designed primarily for general course credit; once a week, Speech and Sacred Studies were required of different classes and Current Events required of all. A full visual aid program enriched group study, and a special speeded reading course and a daily conference period aimed at the maximum in individual instruction. Detailed reports were made on each student every quarter and sent to parents. In one hundred years, educators, who had learned as much as their students, had established new values, set broader aims, and developed techniques to implement them; but probably the clearest lesson of the century, as they well knew, was that they had just scratched the surface of their task.

Just as educators met in conventions and committees to pin down a unit or debate a motivation, people all over the country were also trying to establish patterns and find causes for everything from politics to pistons. Because of Henry Ford and the Wright Brothers, the piston began to move more people and more things faster than they had ever moved before, and for the first time in three hundred years Americans actually found themselves bumping into each other. Pistons were part of politics, for with the closing of the frontier and the increasing tempo came an intensification of economic and social problems for which there was no precedent solution, no rule of thumb. Laws to regulate trade, big business, labor, immigration, and communication were passed by the hundreds and then many were hurriedly revised to meet new needs; in twenty years there were five constitutional amendments. Countries, too, "bumped into each other" and flared into war, but there, regulation was not so easy for they were less ready to yield their sovereignty. There was the dilemma: how to regulate without controlling, how to govern effectively without sapping independence; by the middle of the century, the country had known, and the world was experiencing, both extremes. The patterns and causes were far from clear.

But for each problem there were dozens of the wonders that Americans thrive on. They surprised even themselves by more than doubling their population in fifty years, by multiplying it seven-fold in one hundred. They took pride, as always, in proving that they could "do it again" as they did with yellow fever and the Panama Canal; but they were horrified at the sinking of the Titanic, 'the safest ship afloat,' for it counter-proved that there were things beyond their control. They approved the income tax, the "fairest" source of revenue. They were indignant at the sinking of the Lusitania, responsive and determined in war, shortsighted in peace. They were moralistic in voting prohibition, realistic in repealing it fourteen years later, and at least half the population was triumphant when women finally got to the polls in 1920. They were thrilled by Byrd, hero-struck by Lindbergh, touched by Gehrig. They were "gay" and "roaring" in the twenties, then stunned by the 1929 holocaust, and frightened at their powerlessness. They dallied with socialism through two "deals," purred at radio, the talking picture, and eventually television. As a country, they were attacked by and fought against "the enemies of liberty," and then fashioned the weapon that tinged their victory with awe and caution. As throughout their whole history, they mistrusted power, atomic or political, and set out to curb it by amendment, unification, and experiment.



ALVAN R. GRIER

who dug "new foundations before the ashes were cold and took risk and responsibility."



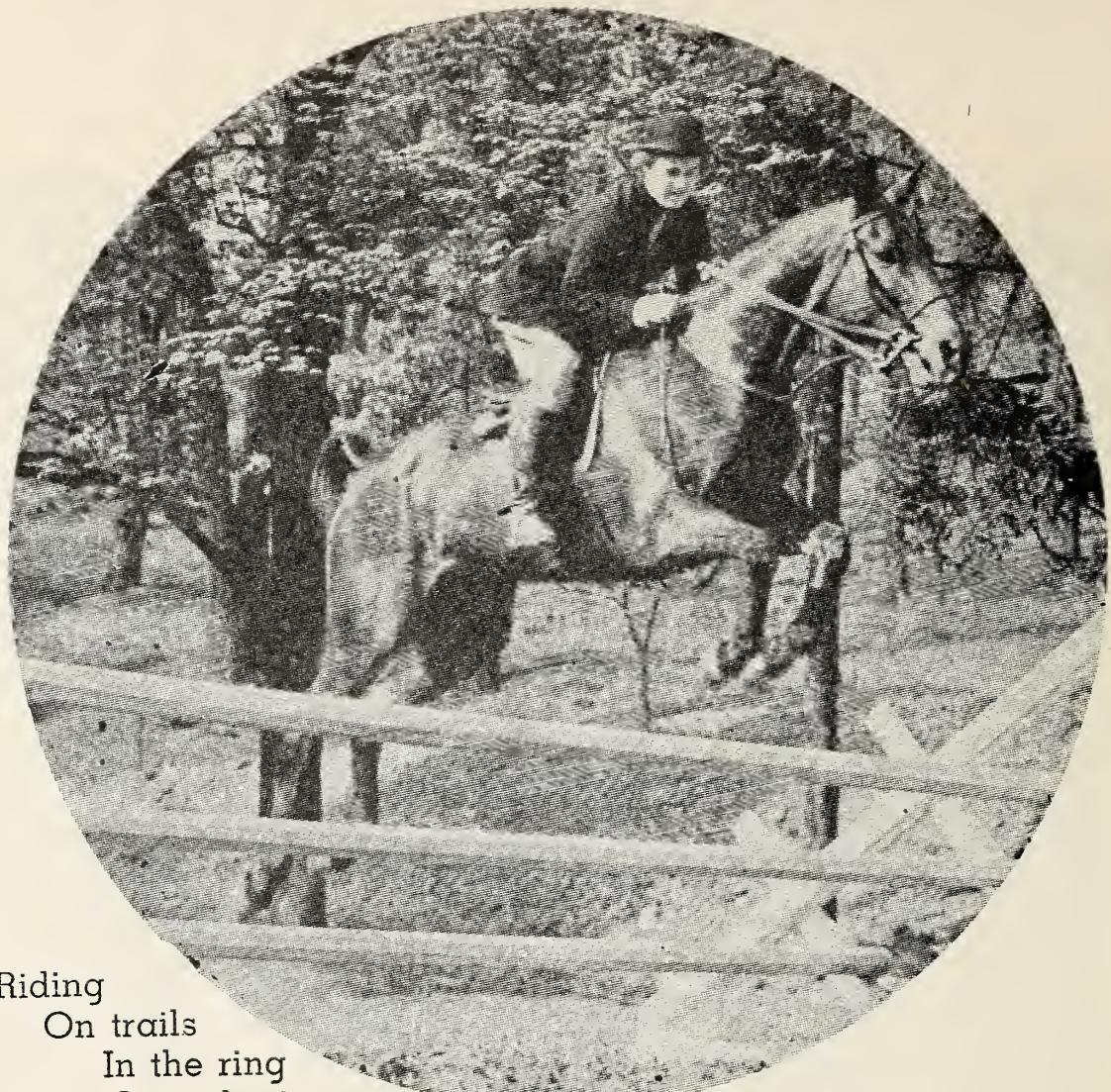
THOMAS C. GRIER

who is the present head of Grier in its new spirit of experiment, change, and expansion.



SOLVEIG B. GRIER

who is co-head of Grier and leader in its successful guidance program.



Riding  
On trails  
In the ring  
Over the jumps



Between classes on the colonnade  
symbol of the school itself

Just as it was against the background of this giant American dynamo that the educators determined the needs of their students, so it was as a part of it that the Mountain Seminary flourished and changed. At the beginning of the century, the enrollment had reached sixty pupils, the tuition had been raised to \$300, and Philadelphia was only "six hours by train." At the school the first excitement of the new century occurred right in the middle of lunch one day in April, 1902, when someone looked through the dining room windows and saw smoke pouring from the third floor of the Lodge. There was immediate evacuation and the fire company was called—by telephone—from Tyrone, but because of poor water supply, the building burned to its foundations. By next fall, however, the Lodge had been rebuilt with almost twice the dormitory accommodations and a third floor recreation room where ping-pong gained vogue. Very shortly, there was a new athletic field, and with it grew an interest in sports that led to the formation of school teams, first named the Athletics and the Pirates, then the Arabs and the Urchins (1910) and finally the Green and the Gold (1916). But just to make sure that each girl got her healthful, physical exercise and was wide awake for the first period class, fifteen minutes of outdoor exercise was scheduled as the first activity of the day. By 1906, the tuition had risen to \$450 and the enrollment to seventy students. In 1907, the school was reorganized as a family corporation; later in the same year, Mrs. Lemuel G. Grier died after fifty years' association with the school, the last twenty as its proprietor.

By 1910, skirts were a shade shorter, pompadours were on their way down, and the suffragette movement was gaining fast. It was a year for innovations: The school adopted the Peter Thompson uniform "to simplify the dress question," installed electricity, and built the colonnade that was to grow as a symbol of the school itself. In the next several years, both tuition and enrollment continued to edge upward and the day department was eliminated. This was the era of Harry Lauder, Oley Speaks, Madame Gluck, and Sarah Bernhardt at Altoona's Mishler Theatre, of PEG O' MY HEART and BIRTH OF A NATION at the Wilson. School cheers were strong on "rickety-rack, kazam, kazam"; chafing dishes were absolutely forbidden; evening dresses were returned home if they were sleeveless or decolette, and "the least among us" might be exalted as the sixth vice-president of the Missionary Society.

1917 was another year of change. A second fire turned the course of events with the burning of the gymnasium, for it precipitated a \$400,000 building program that included Founders Hall, a new gymnasium, swimming pool, sleeping porch, and connecting classrooms. School activities incorporated military drill and student government, both of which were planned to increase self-discipline and self-reliance; as the CRICKET described the advantages of student government:

First, the system makes for a better relationship between teacher and girl; second, a student is in a better position to handle her companions, whose notions and viewpoint she comprehends; lastly, while the system is less revolutionary in effect than the Honor system, it has much the same aim—namely, to cultivate in the American girl, the sense of honor which a generation of constant espionage has almost destroyed.

## THE CRIER SCHOOL

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This was the same year of the first spring vacation and week ends, one allowed before Christmas and one after if permission were granted. The world was at war and two evenings a week were given to the Red Cross. The middy, Phidelah Rice, and the school bus were traditions, the bus finally being immortalized by this tribute in the 1919 PINE NEEDLE:

When you hear a distant squeaking,—  
It's the bus;  
When you hear a creaking, creaking,—  
It's the bus.  
There are heads from windows peeking,  
As the seniors, pleasure-seeking,  
Excitedly are shrieking,—  
"It's the bus!"

When we now wish to go shopping,—  
There's the bus;  
Care we not when trains are stopping,—  
There's the bus.  
Nevermore our damp brow mopping,  
Do we race, all parcels dropping,  
Till the moving train we're hopping,—  
There's the bus.

Up the hill, its speed abating,—  
Comes the bus;  
Seven miles a season, rating,—  
Comes the bus.  
Much impatience oft creating,  
Weary passengers sit waiting,  
Slowly onward, hesitating,—  
Comes the bus.

By 1920 the enrollment had reached one hundred students and the tuition \$1000. In the twenty years since 1900, the tuition had risen \$700, while in the twenty years before 1900, it had decreased \$10; there was another sigh about the good old days. The construction program, started in 1917, continued with the rebuilding of Jolly Hall and the addition of the Nancy Jane Davis library, which was furnished with alumnae contributions. In June, 1921, Miss Davis died at eighty-eight after seventy years as an educator, sixty-four of them with the Mountain Seminary she had helped to reestablish. The many tributes to her described her "power to kindle others' minds, her tenderness, and her austerity" that puts "iron into the blood and fibre into the conscience" (from an address by the Reverend Alfred T. Barr, D.D., a former student of Miss Davis').

The value of such a life as Miss Davis has been privileged to live cannot be estimated in material terms. Its intrinsic worth is rather to be measured in terms of service, of influence, of the molding of character, in the love and esteem of thousands who have gone forth from the halls of Birmingham School. President

Wooley, of Mt. Holyoke, in conferring upon Miss Davis the honorary degree of L.L.T.D. in 1917, spoke thus of her:

"One of the pioneers in education for women,  
an enthusiastic student of those generations of girls,  
a woman whose intellectual leadership is warmly  
attested by the leading citizens of her state."

By the twenties womankind after her constitutional victory was more than ever exercising her independence and more than ever "fad-mad." Shoes were pointed, hair was frizzled then bobbed, and skirts fluttered at the knees —off duty—for the middy still was regulation; it was necessary to be very firm about paint and powder. This was the day of Mah Jonng, a five-piece wonderband, setting up exercises, and a saccharine speciality known as Sumner's dessert. Early in the twenties, Ivy Court was constructed to complete the central landscape much as it is today, and the Birmingham Church was remodeled by the alumnae as a dedication to Miss Davis. Inevitably, the tuition had risen, fluctuated, and settled at \$1300 and the enrollment had increased 25%.

May, 1932, brought the death of Dr. Alvan R. Grier, forty-five years, almost to the day, after he had assumed the management of the school. Known for "digging new foundations before the ashes were cool . . . he took risk and responsibility for the growth of Birmingham and to him must go the credit." (The Reverend Alfred H. Barr, D.D.)

. . . the institution developed under the wise guidance of Mr. Grier, from the days of small enrollments and financial stress to its present substantial character. In recognition of the infinite task and tireless energy with which he has enlarged the scope of the school under his direction, and in recognition of the noteworthy contribution he has made to the cause of true education in maintaining an institution of the highest educational ideals for over two-score years, from which many hundreds of young women have gone forth into life well-equipped in mind and heart for the duties of womanhood, we present Mr. Grier for the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. (1928, by Franklin and Marshall College)

After Dr. Alvan R. Grier's death, the administration of the school was assumed by Thomas C. Grier, the present co-head with his wife Solveig B. Grier. Because of the three-generation association of the family with the school and certain confusion arising from the name 'Birmingham', the name was again changed in 1937 to The Grier School; it continued as a corporation until 1951, when it was reorganized as a sole proprietorship under Thomas Grier, who had acquired all outstanding stock. In the years that have followed, his aims and desires have guided the development of the school under a new spirit of experiment, change, and expansion.

With the early thirties, the middy blouse and serge athletic bloomers were finally forsaken for a tailored green jumper with simple blouse and a tunic; the newest garb, however, was the riding habit and the newest activity riding in horseshows, eventually held in the indoor riding hall built in 1938.

## THE GRIER SCHOOL

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These were the times of the Big Apple, saddle shoes, more dances with Kiski and Mercersburg, and still fluctuating tuition; the biggest event of the decade was Mr. Grier's marriage to Miss Solveig Berg, the new athletic teacher, in a wonderful wedding at the Birmingham Church. In 1940 military drill was ended in the school just as it took on greater significance in the world soon to be shaken by the treachery of December 7. But war or not, on came the coke machine, hair a la Veronica Lake, the "sloppy Jo", and knitting while dummy at bridge. Then the Saturday-Monday week end gave way to the "normal" one, the seniors sprang the Mousetrap, and finally came the announcement 'No uniforms'—except for sweater and skirt: the emancipation had come!

In 1945, the enrollment was the largest in the history of the school, one hundred forty-seven. The school property had grown to 1,000 acres, and two farms, Arch Springs and Flight Pattern, had been purchased in 1941 and 1943 to supply both food and revenue. 1949-1950 brought a grand experiment when the Warrenton Country School in Warrenton, Virginia, was leased and administered as a sister school to Grier. With its location, it seemed sure to thrive, but because of low enrollment, it did not reopen in 1951 and its students transferred to Grier.

In 1953, with the enrollment a little over one hundred and the tuition \$1600, the seniors returned calling themselves the 'centennial class'; it was another year of loafers, bubble gum, and Grier jackets, but something special was in the air. Important things happened: The school became affiliated with the Episcopal Church; a television set was installed in the livingroom, and the faculty elected ten girls to the first school chapter of the National Honor Society; 90% of the student body, the highest percentage in years, earned good citizenship ratings, largely as the fruits of an extensive seven-year guidance program, headed by Mrs. Grier. Then before dinner, one night in December, there was a siren, and everyone ran to the Birmingham Church and watched it burn to the ground in only an hour; students saw the roof cave, heard the bell fall, and regretted that it had happened in the centennial year. One hundred years held meaning.

In 1953, a rocking chair was an antique, and "the shot heard 'round the world" was two life spans away; against these life spans the last one hundred years held significance beyond measure. To have been a part of the growth of this century and to have contributed to it gave feelings of accomplishment, pride, humility, and, above all, promise for the coming years.

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Unpublished historical documents, such as Miss Davis' account of the early school, John Cadwallader's advertisement, deeds, and so forth  
Published material, such as school catalogs 1861-1953; all available school papers (*CRICKETS* of 1894, 1899-1903, 1917) and yearsbooks (*THE CARDINAL*, 1901; *PINE NEEDLE*, 1910-52); Mr. Thomas C. Grier's history, which appeared in two issues of *THE SCRIBUNE*, 1951-52.



ONE HUNDRED YEARS HOLD MEANING  
(from left to right)

Susan Arble '56, daughter of Lenore Cowher, '24  
Priscilla Johnston '53, daughter of Priscilla Burnett '29  
Suzanne Lund '53, daughter of Catherine Alexander ex '30  
Ann Slaughter '53, daughter of Hester Meek '29 (deceased)  
Susan Winn '55, great-granddaughter of Aggie Gardiner '68  
Antoinette Donnan '54, daughter of Antoinette Tomlin '26





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